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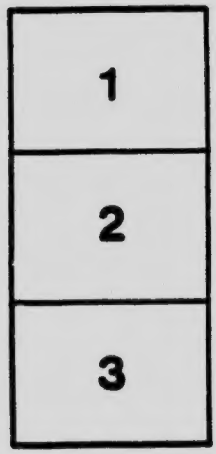

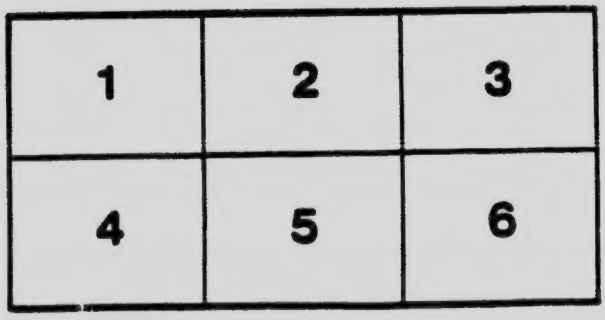

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

BY

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

W. LEE HANKEY

TORONTO
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INTRODUCTION

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born at Pallasmore or Pallas, County Longford, on the 10th of November 1728, and died in his chambers, Brick Court, Temple, on the 4th of April 1774. Four years before his death, in the same chambers, in his forty-second year, he wrote *The Deserted Village*, which was published by W. Griffin at the Garrick's Head in Catherine Street, Strand, in a 32-page quarto, and sold for two shillings. Simultaneously, an octavo edition would seem to have been privately circulated, and several variants of this are known to exist. For *The Traveller*, published six years before, at one and sixpence, he had only obtained twenty guineas; for the new poem he is said, though upon

somewhat uncertain authority, to have been paid at the rate of five shillings a line (one hundred guineas). It was announced from time to time in the spring of 1770 and finally appeared on the 26th of May—the title-page bearing a steel engraving illustrating line 136, 'The sad historian of the pensive plain': this was engraved by Isaac Taylor, the grandfather of Jane and Ann Taylor, the well-known writers for children. A second edition appeared on the 7th, a third on the 14th of June: the fourth, which appeared on the 28th of the same month, was a revise, and in July Goldsmith left London for a holiday in Paris, where he felt himself, he tells us, 'a fish out of water.' The text adopted here is that of the fourth edition, though a few of Bolton Corney's additional corrections in regard to the punctuation have been adopted.

INTRODUCTION

The leading idea of the new poem is derived from the concluding paragraphs of its predecessor, *The Traveller*, in which the poet speaks of ambition, opulence, stern depopulation, and compulsory exile. *The Deserted Village* itself was developed from childish recollections of Lissoy in Kilkenny West, where the author's early life was spent. But Lissoy was greatly idealised for the portrait of 'Sweet Auburn' (a corruption of Aldbourn, near Marlborough). The ejectment depicted so movingly may indeed have been seen in Munster; the rural paradise described is much more likely to have been observed in Surrey or Kent. Johnson, who had coached Goldsmith on previous poetical occasions, who (according to Boswell) contributed the four last lines to the present poem, and who was to sum Goldsmith the writer for all time in

his best lapidary Latin, thought *The Deserted Village* inferior to *The Traveller*; but he has remained almost alone in this opinion. Goldsmith was a plant that flowered late; whose excellencies were ripening as long as ever he lived. Fortunately, he had too much heart to attain to proficiency in the dismal science. His theory of history is open to the same imputation as that of Longfellow's *Evangeline*; it is too simple to be very profound.

The poem is not entirely free from obvious technical faults. The iteration of one or two words, such as 'train' and 'pomp' and 'clime,' and of one or two rhymes such as 'domain' and 'reign,' seems to hamper the formal measure a little unnecessarily, though this tendency to monotony is considerably mitigated by the breaks or pauses which should on no account be

omitted whether in printing or reading the poem. Yet, after wellnigh a century and a half, the general verdict is that succinctly expressed by Gray, 'This man is a poet,' or by Burke when he wrote of the 'pretty pastoral images' 'which beat all Pope, Philips, and Spenser too in my opinion.' 'Goldsmith could do it better' was a phrase that leapt unbidden not to the lips of Dr. Johnson alone among the wits and essayists of three generations. Goethe tried to translate the poem, but could not satisfy himself that he was really transferring its innumerable beauties. It has been translated into French, Latin, Italian, German, Armenian, and other tongues; but the language which it has permanently enriched far above any other is our own, and that in an age so rich in quotable, didactic and de-

scriptive poetry as that of Pope, Shenstone, Thomson, Gray, Cowper, and the author of *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. To a gay humour, the finest taste, and a natural sincerity of feeling, Goldsmith joined in this work a carefully cultivated gift of popular selection, vast practice in every kind of writing, and a gravely deliberate workmanship: three or four couplets was, for him, a good day's work. A few couplets and rhythms here and there would almost seem to indicate the romantic spirit of poetry latent within him.

> 'Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
> The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest.'

> 'Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
> But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling.'

The passage describing 'the sad historian of the

pensive plain' is rather suggestive of Wordsworth. But, apart from the easy flow, the qualities which distinguish Goldsmith most above the level of the school of Pope are the traits of artless nature, the semi-colloquial emphasis with which certain words or phrases are happily repeated, the unstudied wealth of metaphor. As phrases such as 'Await alike the inevitable hour, The paths of glory lead but to the grave,' were long gestated by Gray, so we may be sure that many a poetical reminiscence, like

'Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won,'

was treasured by Goldsmith, and had lain long in his memory before it was brought out to delight us. To Shenstone's *Schoolmistress* and to Gray's *Elegy* (its one rival in popular favour) Goldsmith may have owed a trifling debt. To be sure, it has long since been famously

repaid, and more than repaid. For Gray's *Elegy* is always tinged by the sadness of autumn, whereas in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, notwithstanding the 'desert,' we are in a vernal atmosphere, fanned by the breath of spring. All the motions of this man's nature, as De Quincey said, were in the direction of the true, the natural, the sweet, the gentle.

T. S.

LIST OF COLOURED PLATES

The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
Frontispiece

Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn.
Facing page 21

The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill.
Facing page 22

The dancing pair, that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down.
Facing page 24

The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
Facing page 26

Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall.
Facing page 28

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man.
Facing page 30

Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene.
Facing page 32

Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks, and ruined grounds.
Facing page 34

I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw.
Facing page 36

How happy he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease.
Facing page 38

There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below.
Facing page 40

The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool.
Facing page 42

LIST OF COLOURED PLATES

The playful children just let loose from school.
Facing page 44

She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain!
Facing page 46

There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
Facing page 48

A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.
Facing page 50

The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast.
Facing page 52

Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
Facing page 54

But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.
Facing page 56

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

E'en children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
Facing page 58

A man severe he was, and stern to view.
Facing page 60

And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.
Facing page 62

Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye.
Facing page 64

Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Facing page 66

While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.
Facing page 68

The host himself.
Facing page 70

LIST OF COLOURED PLATES

Nor the coy maid, half willing to be pressed,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Facing page 72

Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes.

Facing page 74

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside?

Facing page 76

If, to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade.

Facing page 78

She once, perhaps, in village plenty blessed,
Has wept at tales of innocence distressed.

Facing page 80

And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour.

Facing page 82

She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Facing page 84

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling.
Facing page 86

The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green.
Facing page 88

His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears.
Facing page 90

And left a lover's for a father's arms.
Facing page 92

And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear.
Facing page 96

Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
Thou found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so.
Facing page 98

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

THE
DESERTED VILLAGE

SWEET AUBURN! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please:

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!

How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

The hawthorn bush, with
seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whisper-
ing lovers made!
How often have I blessed
the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree,
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending, as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went
round:

And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair, that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed;
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.

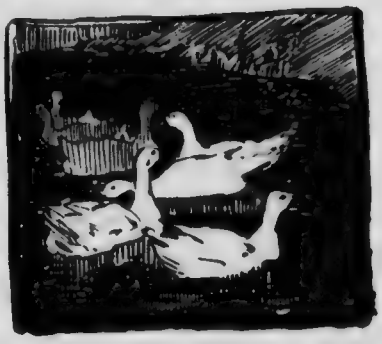
THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away, thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade—
A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE



For him light labour spread her
wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but
gave no more:
His best companions, innocence
and health,
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain:
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose;
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,

Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

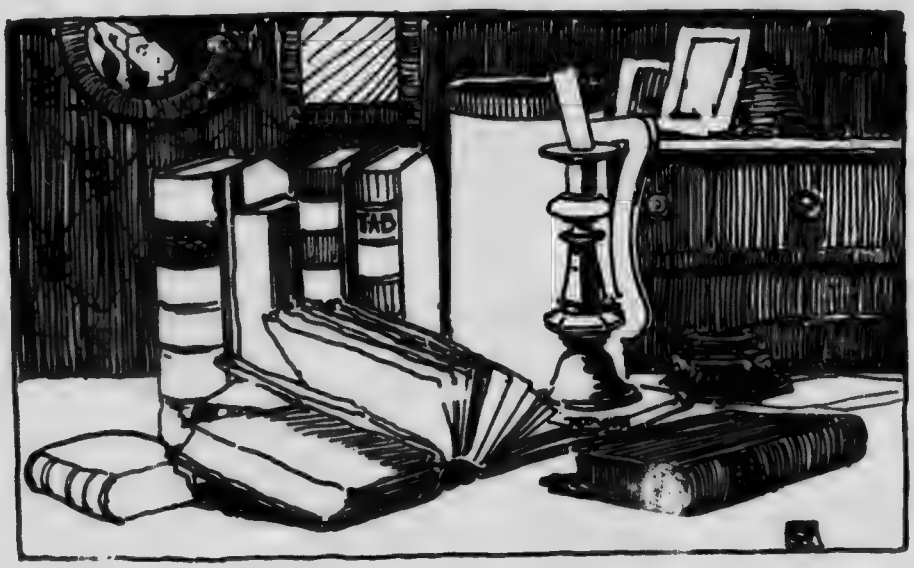
THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks, and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose.



I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;

And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,

I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

How happy he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease;

Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep,

No surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;

But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;

Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;

And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His Heaven commences ere the world be past!

Sweet was the sound, when oft, at evening's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;

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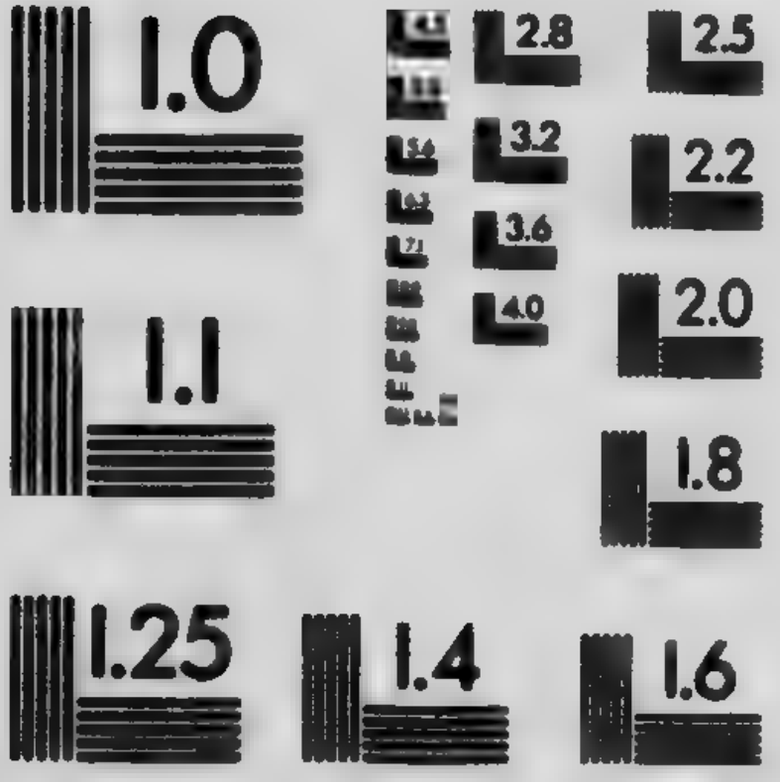

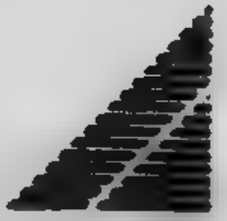

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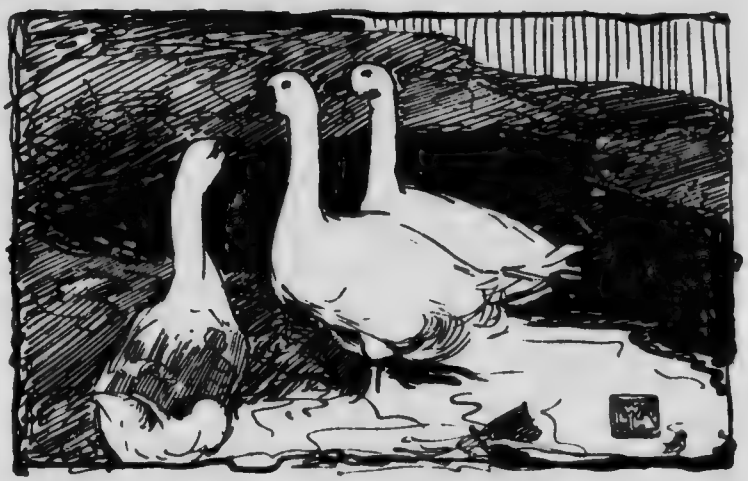
THE DESERTED VILLAGE

There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;



The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;

The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;

These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled;

All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn—

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain!

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

A man he was to all the country dear,

And passing rich with forty pounds a year;

Remote from towns he ran his godly race,

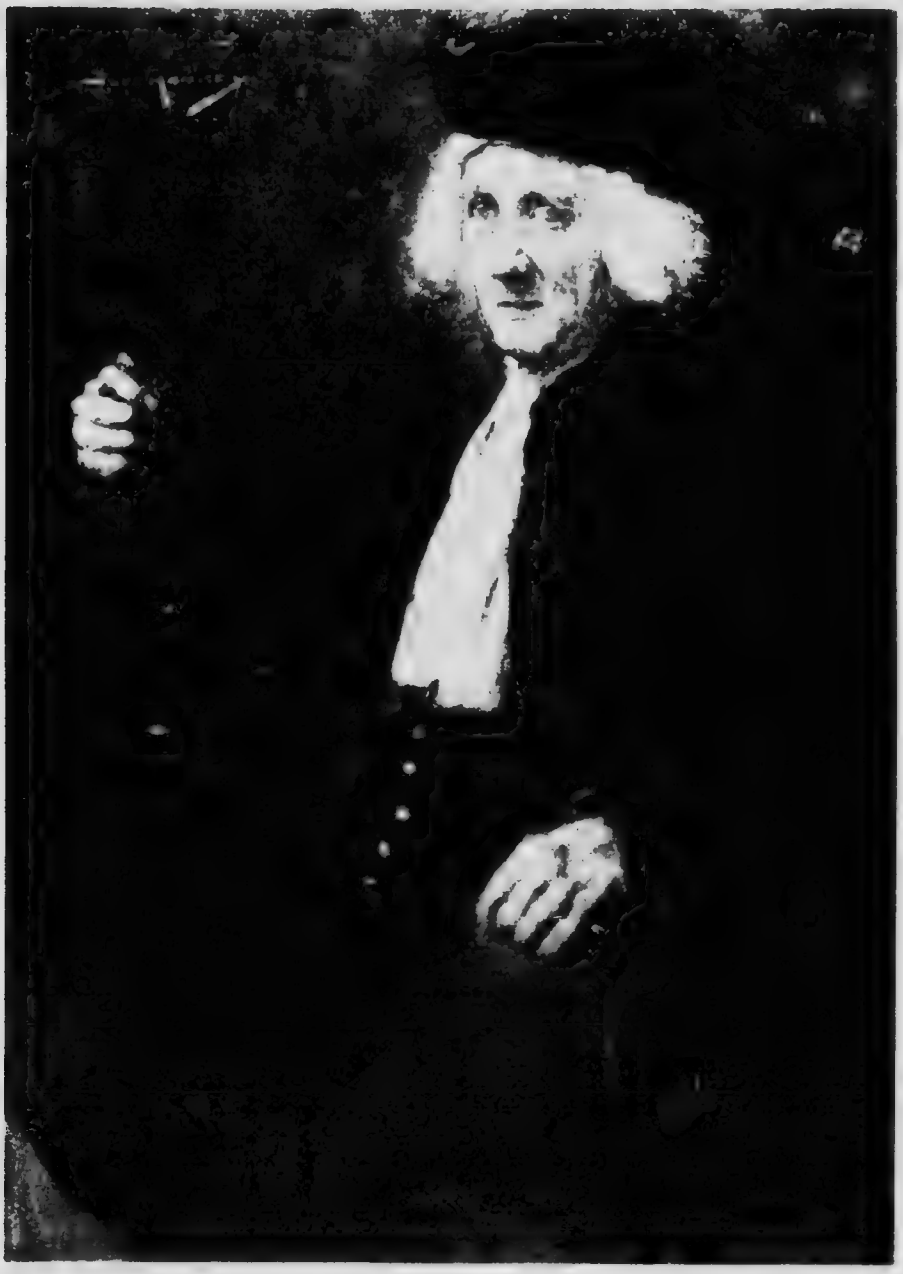
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place;

Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,

By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour,

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched, than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain:
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;



Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;

But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;

Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

The service past, around the pious man
With steady zeal each honest rustic ran;
E'en children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile:
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed:
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay—

There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school:
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned;
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault:
The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran—that he could gauge:
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

While words of learnéd length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot,
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,

Low lies that house, where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place;
The white-washed wall, the nicely-sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest, contrived a double debt to pay,—
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers and fennel gay;

While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

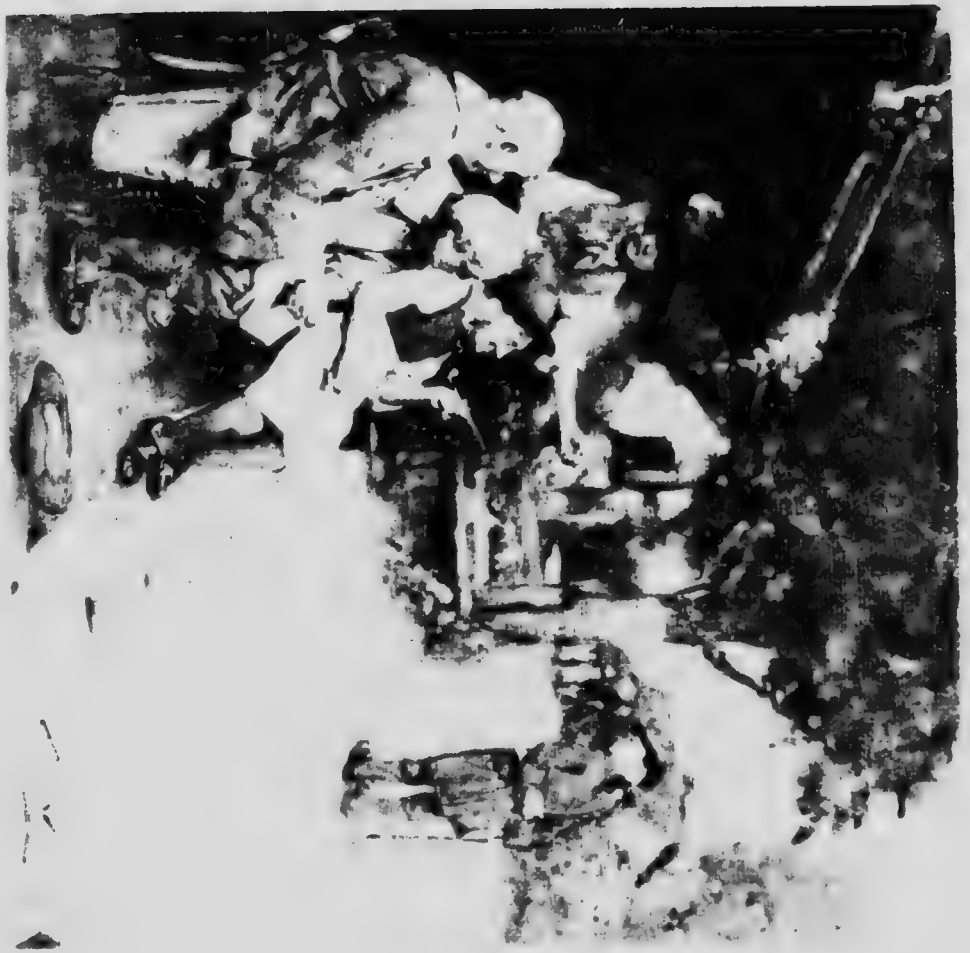
Vain transitory splendours! Could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be pressed,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.



THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train,
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art:
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy?

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

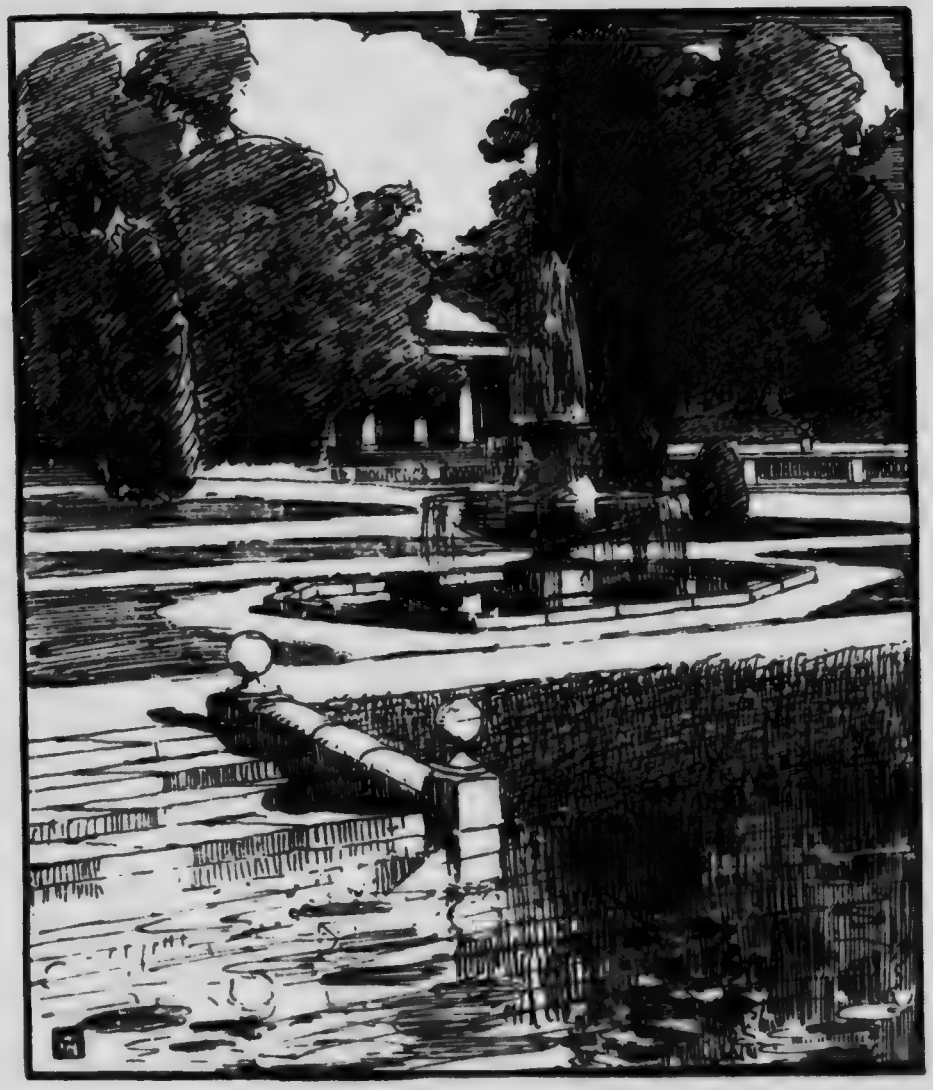
Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name,
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a place that many poor supplied

Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds:

The robe, that wraps his limbs in silken sloth,
Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their growth;

His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies:
While thus the land, adorned for pleasure all,
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But, when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,



THE DESERTED VILLAGE

She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress.
Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed;
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed,
But, verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;

While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And, while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden, and a grave.

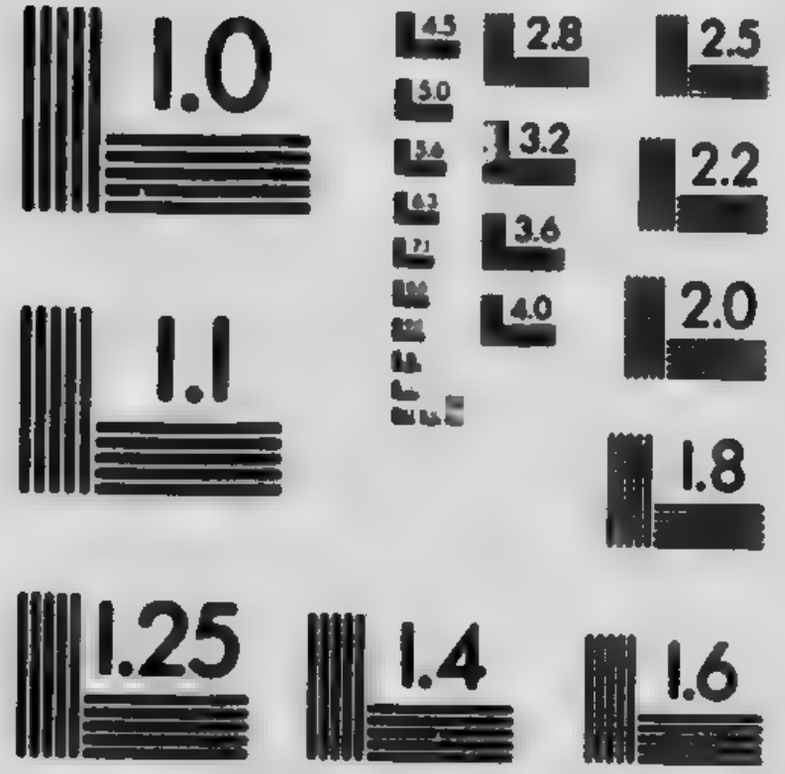
THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?

If, to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And e'en the bare-worn common is denied.

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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THE DESERTED VILLAGE

If to the city sped—what waits him there?

To see profusion that he must not share;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see those joys the sons of pleasure know,
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There, the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There, the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Are these thy serious thoughts?—Ah! turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blessed,
Has wept at tales of innocence distressed;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;

Now lost to all, her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet Auburn; thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!

And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the breeze,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;

Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.

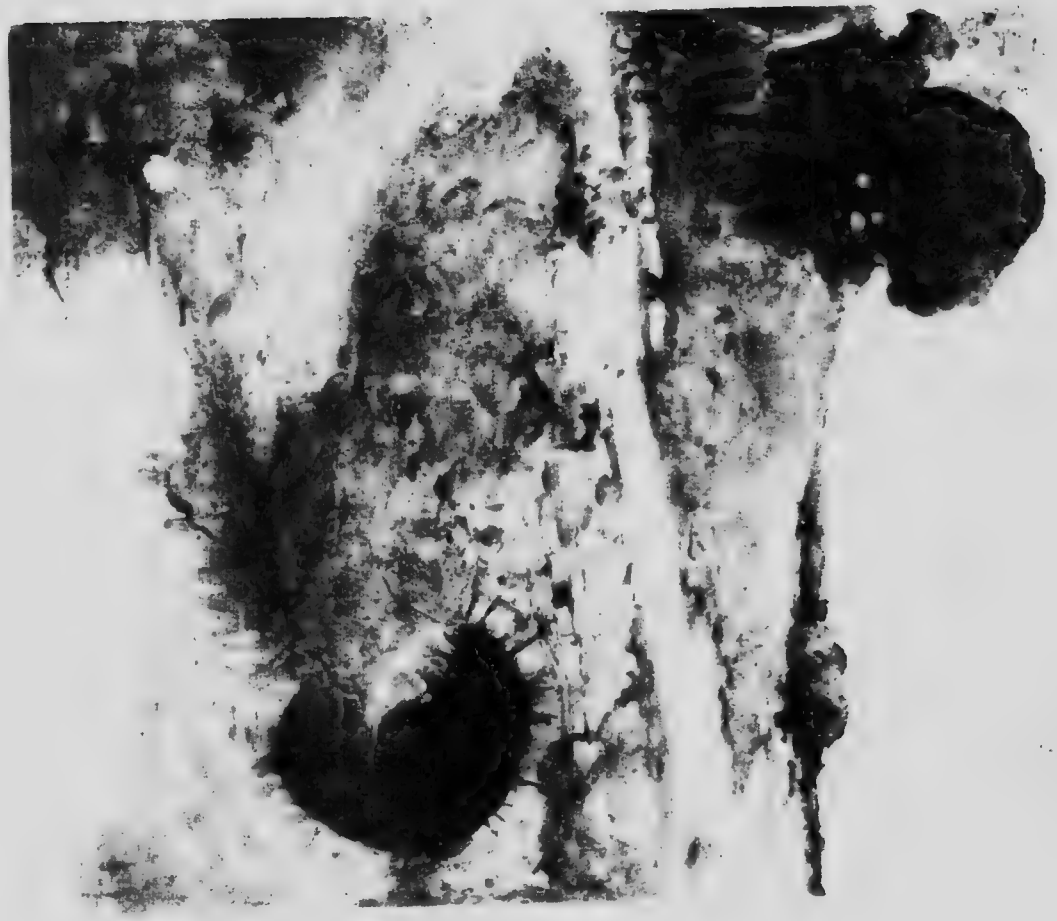
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

M

THE DESFRTED VILLAGE

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day,
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last—
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main—

And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blessed the cot where every pleasure rose,
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;



THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Whilst her fond husband
strove to lend relief,
In all the silent manliness
of grief.

O Luxury! thou curst
by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are
things like these for
thee!

How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own:

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till, sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down, they sink, and spread a ruin round.

Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.

His lovely daughter, loveliest in her tears.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there,
And piety with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming Nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
Thou found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell; and oh! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him, that states, of native strength possessed,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the laboured mole away ;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

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